A side effect of psychopathy

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A side effect of psychopathy

by voxofthevoid

Summary

In which Tobias serenades the Ripper, flirts with Hannibal and Will's possessive side makes a grand debut. Franklyn, of course, is caught up in it all.

What they felt wasn't love; not in the traditional sense. Obsession, perhaps devotion. And neither was ever going to let the other go.

Notes

You'll understand this better if you've read the first part, but it's not mandatory. But do keep in mind that Will is also pretty fucked up in this.

For this installment, I'm going to use a lot of scenes and elements from Sorbet and Fromage, but I don't plan on writing out the episodes entirely. I'll skip a lot, modify things and I am really going to fuck with the timeline. You've been warned. And I have no idea what Mrs Komeda's actual first name is.

Translation into Vietnamese by HeylinEclipse available here

Edit, July 2022: This fic now has a Russian translation by Gays_Lover. You can find it here.

- Translation into Русский available: Тьма, которую я вижу и разделяю by Gays_Lover

Lions in the room

Will stared at his reflection in the mirror. Then, he blinked. Once. Twice.

It wasn't that he didn't look good. He did, maybe a little *too* good. He felt strangely exposed in the standard black tuxedo with his face clean shaven. The only times he actually cleaned himself up all that well was when he went 'hunting'. And he most certainly wasn't going to hunt anything tonight. No, he was all dressed up to go out on a date. To the opera. With Hannibal.

God help him.

He smoothed his hands over the sides of the suit, the fine material feeling downright heavenly under his palm. It was, of course, a perfect fit though Will just might start to have nightmares about that day Hannibal dragged him out to get him fitted for it. And he had to wonder if the way the material accentuated his lean form was more for the doctor's benefit than his own.

That damn cannibal lover of his so owed him for this.

While Will was not a complete failure in terms of socializing as he'd led most of his acquaintances to believe, there was no doubt whatsoever that he would rather spend the evening lounging with his dogs or better yet, with Hannibal *and* the dogs, instead of going to the opera. He didn't even *like* the opera.

But he was going to attend anyway because Hannibal had asked him to. For a forty five year old sadistic serial killer, that man could pull of a decent pair of puppy dog eyes.

With a final, rueful glance at the mirror, Will exited the bathroom and made his way out of his house, keeping his dogs at bay as he did so. It wouldn't do to get dog hair on the tux.

He wished he was going to Hannibal's house instead of the opera house. That had been the original plan. But thanks to Jack and his stronger than ever obsession with the Ripper (personally, he found the stunt with Miriam's arm a bit gauche, but Hannibal evidently didn't), he'd been late. Actually, Will had been tempted to just yell at the man that he had a date with said Ripper and could he *please* just leave.

He had refrained, of course, making up an excuse about one of his dogs being sick to leave early. The two of them weren't going out of their way to hide their relationship, but neither wanted anyone to find out just yet. Will was pretty damn sure that the reactions would be less than favorable and he didn't want to sully the sanctity of their partnership with their pitiful protests and annoying accusations just yet. All in due time.

He got in to the car and let out a small, resigned sigh.

It was time to face the music.

*

Hannibal's reaction, he decided, was very much worth the extra time he took to rid his face of his beard, even the small scruff he always kept. The generally composed doctor was staring at Will with something very much like awe in his eyes.

He smiled and walked towards him, slightly disappointed when the man regained his usual composure to give him a wide smile.

"I was half afraid you wouldn't come." Hannibal told him with a quick kiss on the lips.

"Well, I was tempted," he replied, reaching up to curl a hand around the back of his lover's neck. "But it was either this or watching Jack run in circles around the Chesapeake Ripper while trying his best to drag me along with him. I decided that I preferred the Ripper's company in the flesh."

Hannibal chuckled and he released him, stepping back a little so that he could see the other man properly. The psychiatrist looked as immaculate and handsome as ever in a dark blue tuxedo. He was also rather distracting. Will already had an idea what he would be engaging himself with during the opera.

Although, he had to admit that he still preferred seeing Hannibal in a plain shirt, with his sleeves rolled up to the elbows and wearing an apron. Or wearing *nothing* at all. He wasn't picky in that regard.

And these thoughts were really not suited to their current situation.

"Shall we head inside, Will?" Hannibal asked him, jerking him out of his thoughts, dark eyes shining with mirth as if he knew precisely what was running through the profiler's head.

"Lead the way."

This was going to be a long night.

*

Hannibal had felt more resigned than disappointed when Will fled his side as soon as the performance ended and the socializing began. Maybe one day, he would manage to convince the empath to shed his mask for a while at an event like this, but that day was evidently not today. His parting words had inspired some thought though.

"One of your two ardent admirers seems to be quite interesting.'

He'd been fully aware of Franklyn's eyes on him during the show, had resolutely ignored him as well. The second pair of eyes he'd felt had been more of an unknown quantity, though it seemed like that would soon cease to be the case.

Hannibal resisted the urge to look at Will, whom he could see out of the corner of his eyes, leaning against a wall at a short distance from him, to see if the profiler had noticed the mismatched duo that were navigating their way towards Hannibal through the crowd with no subtlety whatsoever.

He returned his attention to Mrs Komeda and their conversation as she teasingly reprimanded him.

“I said properly. Means dinner and the show. Have you seen him cook? It’s an entire performance. He used to throw such exquisite dinner parties. You heard me. *Used to*.”

“And I will again,” he replied, smiling at the praise. He wondered though, as he often did when someone-other than Will, of course- complimented his cooking, how she would react if she were to ever find out exactly *what* he fed them all. As always, the thought amused him to no end. “Once inspiration strikes. I cannot force a feast. A feast must present itself.” He could almost hear the exasperated sigh Will would give if he were to hear those words. The profiler seemed to be equally entertained and exasperated by the ‘dreadful cannibal puns that anyone with half a brain should be able to figure out.’ Will’s words, not his.

“It’s a dinner party, not a unicorn.”

“Oh, but the feast is life.” Franklyn and his companion were quite close to them now, hovering at the edge of their circle in an obvious attempt to catch his attention. He held back a grimace. “You put the life in your belly and you live.”

“I believe this young man is trying to get your attention.” Mrs Komeda announced into the pleasant silence that followed his proclamation.

Easily hiding his irritation at this breach of professional boundaries, Hannibal turned to face Franklyn, a polite smile on his face.

“Hello, Franklyn.”

“Hi.” The man was practically vibrating out of his skin with nervous excitement. He reeked of desperation. “It’s so good to see you. This is my friend, Tobias.”

Ah, what do we have here?

“Good evening.” Hannibal greeted the other man, staring into dark eyes that held death in them. He didn’t even make an effort to hide his nature, showing his truth to all and any who knew how to look. And Hannibal most certainly knew how to look. As did Will. In his peripheral vision, he could see the empath slowly making his way towards them. He probably had Tobias to thank for his lover’s change of heart. That and Will’s own curiosity.

“How do you two know each other?” Mrs Komeda asked, though her voice held an undertone of disdain. He couldn’t quite blame her.

“There should remain some mystery to my life outside the opera,” he replied, mindful of the too-intense gaze Tobias was directing at him. His effort to save Franklyn the trouble of

admitting to being his patient was ruined by the man himself.

“I’m one of his patients.” He said it with an inordinate amount of *pride* in his voice and Hannibal immediately began composing a list of the psychiatrists he despised, but couldn’t dispose of in his usual manner. He could always refer Franklyn to one of them. Otherwise, he'd end up killing the neurotic, overbearing creature out of sheer boredom and irritation.

“Did you enjoy the performance?” Hannibal asked the two interlopers, trying to salvage the situation.

“I did. I loved it. Every minute.” Yes, a referral. Certainly. And soon.

Tobias, who had been silent until now, chose that moment to interject, his words tactless and deliberate. “His eyes kept wandering. More interested in you than what was happening on stage.” Hannibal dismissed the statement with a polite smile, more focused on what his eyes were telling him. Tobias was staring at Hannibal with an intense, assessing gaze, as if measuring his *worth* for something.

Any amusement he might have felt was eclipsed by the mixture of ire and anger rose inside him, the beast within stirring with the urge to destroy and devour the lesser predator.

He didn’t notice Will until a familiar arm slid around his waist in a strong, claiming grip and a warm body pressed up intimately against his side.

The surprised looks of his fellow socialites, Franklyn’s incredulous glare and the cold gaze of Tobias were all ignored in favor of smiling fondly at the man beside him.

“Hello, Will. I’m glad you decided to join us.”

*

When the large, obviously neurotic (obvious to him at least) man and his *friend* first approached Hannibal, it had been mere curiosity on his part that urged him to approach them, to listen to the words being exchanged. He’d not been planning on joining them, just observing. Will knew without a doubt that this man named Tobias was a killer and a psychopath to boot. A moderately dangerous one at least, if his instincts were anything to go by.

If he could, he’d feel pity for the man named Franklyn, Hannibal’s patient who was so desperate for his attention and entirely transparent in his futile attempts to befriend the psychiatrist. As it was, he was just amused by his antics and Hannibal’s frustration which he hid so well, but was all too visible to Will.

But, in the end, it was the measuring, hungry gaze that Tobias directed at his partner that prompted Will to move to Hannibal’s side and position himself in a manner that left no doubt as to the exact nature of their relationship.

There was a… covetousness in that man's eyes that set his teeth on edge and stirred something inside of him that wanted to assert his claim on what he considered to be his. It was a primal, base response, but then again, weren't they all animals at heart?

His hold on Hannibal was firm and possessive, his hand encircling the man's waist as Will molded himself to his side, the two fitting together perfectly.

He easily returned Hannibal's affectionate smile, dropping his usual charade for the time being.

"Hello, Will. I'm glad you decided to join us."

Before he could respond, the woman that he had seen talking to Hannibal before interjected, eyeing Will with a sort of perplexed surprise that was mirrored in the faces of the others that surrounded them.

"And who is this?"

Hannibal's hand settled in the small of his back, snug and solid, and Will leaned into it slightly. There was really only one person in the world from whom he actually welcomed touch.

"Ah, forgive me. Ladies and gentlemen, allow me to introduce Will Graham. My partner." The last part was met with a stunned silence and Will had some trouble holding back a smirk.

"You have a boyfriend?" the outraged query came from none other than Hannibal's enamored patient, who was gaping at Will with his mouth flopping open unattractively. The accusatory tone of his voice only served to add to his mirth. But Will's gaze was soon drawn to the eerily silent man beside Franklyn who was staring at Will with another expression altogether. It was the same, measuring gaze he'd trained on Hannibal a moment ago, but this time, there was disdain in it instead of hunger.

Will held that dark gaze with ease, a clear challenge in his eyes. But he was careful to make sure that none of his darkness peeked through, hiding it away in the deep, shadowy chambers of his mind as he so often did. He was certain that Tobias had sensed *something* about Hannibal. And until they knew for sure what it was that he'd seen, it wouldn't do for the same to happen with Will. For now, he could play the part of the prey.

He felt his lips twist into a smile that was just shy of a smirk as he heard Hannibal's reply.

"Yes, though we both prefer a less juvenile term."

"But-" Will glanced at Franklyn and had to struggle to keep his laughter in check at the expression on the man's face. He looked like a kicked puppy. Only a lot less adorable.

"Now, Franklyn, you need to leave us something to discuss next week. It was good to see you." Hannibal shook his hand, that unfailingly polite smile still in place despite the blatant dismissal.

“Tobias.” There really was no mistaking the darkness that flashed in the man’s eyes as he took Hannibal’s hand. Either the man intended to kill Hannibal- which was a pretty ridiculous notion when you thought about it, but one that grated on him nonetheless- or he wanted to pursue something else entirely with the doctor.

Neither option was even remotely acceptable as far as Will was concerned.

After the two of them left, Hannibal turned back to his ‘friends’, Will trapped beside him even though his desire to be there had vanished right alongside with Tobias.

“So, Mr Graham, what do you do?” The woman from earlier asked, eyes burning with interest.

“I work as a profiler for the F.B.I.” Technically, he was a teacher. But nowadays, he spent more time out in the field than in a classroom, thanks to Jack. Not that he was complaining. It was quite a treat to experience Jack’s reactions to a scene of his or Hannibal’s making firsthand.

“Will is quite the expert in his field.” Hannibal added, genuine pride lacing his words. “He’s published a number of very fascinating monographs and is an excellent profiler. One like no other.”

It was a struggle not to elbow Hannibal at the side, but he managed to refrain from the childish rebuke. Really, he’d brought this up on himself. And Hannibal had evidently not been kidding when he’d said he wanted to show Will off.

He spent the next few minutes answering inane questions about his work and listening to them gushing about how Hannibal’s never brought a date with him to any of these events before.

“So,” The woman- Catherine Komeda- began, turning to Hannibal expectantly, “How about that feast? Inspired yet?”

Hannibal smiled and glanced at Will with a mischievous glint in his eyes before responding, “Perhaps I do not need to seek inspiration when it has been there all along. I will throw a dinner party…in Will’s honor.”

Will blinked, once, the fake smile freezing in place.

He raised an eyebrow at Hannibal, letting his confusion show. He just received a roguish grin in return.

He sighed, exasperated. So much for secrecy.

A dinner party in his honor.

Fuck.

*

Will found himself pressed against Hannibal's front door mere seconds after the two of them set foot inside the house, the doctors arms and body trapping him against the solid wood. Every single one of his instincts screamed in protest at being cornered like this by someone he *knew* to be dangerous, but he pushed them aside in favor of wrapping his arms around Hannibal, grinning.

Relationships were all about compromises after all. Though for them, compromises generally involved stopping themselves from killing each other when they clashed.

"I quite enjoyed your display there, Will. But I'm curious as to what incited you." Hannibal murmured against his mouth, lips brushing against each other with the motion.

"I didn't like the way he looked at you." he replied, fully aware that he sounded like a jealous spouse. But he was equally certain that Hannibal knew precisely *what* he was talking about.

Besides, he never said that he wasn't possessive.

Hannibal kissed him then, the hands on either side of his face shifting to his shoulders and pinning him in place as he bit and licked his way into Will's mouth, their tongues tangling together. He arched as best as he can and pressed against the body holding him in place, hands twisting none too gently in Hannibal's ridiculously expensive jacket, which was just in the way at the moment.

Their kiss was broken abruptly, before it could become more, when Will's phone began ringing, Jack's ringtone blaring out and startling them both. Will glanced at Hannibal, saw his own ire reflected in his eyes and for a moment, was sorely tempted to just throw away the damn device and continue where they left off. But he knew Jack and that man was nothing if not persistent. He wouldn't put it past him to come calling on Hannibal if he couldn't find Will. And he was in no mood to answer the questions that would surely follow if he were to find the two of them in a compromising situation.

He reluctantly answered the phone, keeping an arm around Hannibal to keep him there.

"Do you know what time it is, Jack?" he asked in lieu of a greeting.

"We've got a body." There was a mildly familiar tenor to Jack's voice. One that he associated with… "I think it might be the Ripper, Will." *That.*

"The Ripper?" he echoed, raising his brows at Hannibal who shook his head with a smile. "Are you sure, Jack?"

"Well, that's what I have you for. You'll get the scene fresh. I'll pick you up in-"

"No, that won't be necessary. Just text me the address and I'll be there."

He hung up before Jack could protest and let out a weary sigh. Hannibal seemed torn between annoyance and curiosity.

“I suppose this isn’t a surprise gift from you,” he stated, deadpan. His phone beeped with Jack’s message and he checked out the address. At least it was in Baltimore.

“I guess I’ll go change. I don’t want to consult wearing date clothes.” God knew how the team would react to him *having* a social life.

He resolutely ignored Hannibal’s amused chuckle as he made his way upstairs to change into his usual ensemble, Hannibal’s gigantic closet now housing a few of Will’s clothes as well. He could always just mess up his hair to return it to its usual state, but there was nothing he could do about the stubble, or lack thereof. And he didn’t have his glasses. Damn.

Long night, indeed.

*

“It’s the Ripper.”

Will resisted the urge to roll his eyes at Zeller's persistence as he unceremoniously closed the door in the man's face, leaving him alone with Jack in the hotel bathroom.

“Are you sure, Will?” Jack asked, though there was little hope in his voice.

“Quite.”

“Why are you sure?”

Will let out a tired sigh- he would really like to get some sleep soon- and resumed his perch on the toilet seat, not looking at Jack as he spoke.

“The Ripper once left a victim on a church pew, using his tongue as a page marker for the Bible he was holding. This isn’t that.” *There’s no art here. No beauty*.

There were several more other examples he could quote. Will knew Hannibal’s work almost as much as his own by now and he truly couldn’t see how anyone, especially these people who’ve been profiling the Chesapeake Ripper for years, could mistake this sloppy kill as the work of an experienced killer with a dramatic flair.

“This is a medical student or a trainee, someone trying to make an extra buck in back alley surgery. And it went bad. Actively bad.”

He could feel Jack’s despair coming off him in waves and he drank it in, savoring it.

“I’ll catch him one day. And when I do, you won’t have a chance to shoot him. Because I will.” Jack told him, his face set in grim determination.

Will let the corners of his lips twitch up in a minute smile at Jack’s utterly hopeless wish. He could understand it of course, but that didn’t make it any less ridiculous. How were they

going to catch the Ripper if they were far too close to him to even *see* him? And what made Jack think Hannibal would ever leave any evidence?

But he kept his thoughts to himself and let Jack stew in his own juices for a while. His question, when it came, was as predictable as ever.

“Tell me, Will, how do *you* see the Ripper?”

Will closed his eyes and tipped his head back, picturing Hannibal’s face behind his lids. He kept his face blank, mindful of Jack’s eyes on him, but his voice had a loving quality to it as he described a facet of his lover to the man who wanted so desperately to catch him.

“I see him… as an artist. He’s unlike any other, there’s no word to *define* what he is. He’s not a psychopath or a sociopath; nothing that can be labeled. There are no *boundaries* we can impose on him. He is a force of nature, untamed and unmatched.”

I see him as… mine.

*

In the end, it was because of Beverly and her keen observational skills that they caught the pseudo Ripper, a couple of days after the act.

They found Devon Silvestri in his apartment, an MCAT student and part-time ambulance driver who, as Will predicted, was trying to make some money through illegal surgery. He confessed easily enough, his terror at being caught more than enough to loosen his tongue.

Jack seemed to be more disappointed at the crime being completely disconnected to the actual Ripper than relieved at having caught the guy.

Zeller ended up sulking at being proven wrong. Losing a bet on the matter to Beverly didn’t seem to help him.

Hannibal was amused by the whole fiasco.

Will was just bored by the end of it all.

An unwanted serenade

Chapter Summary

Tobias sends a message. Our boys send one right back.

Chapter Notes

Remember when I said that I was going to fuck with the timeline? Well, it bears repeating.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

"This always goes better if I'm perfectly honest with you." Bedelia told him, her voice betraying nothing as usual.

"What would be the point otherwise?" he shot back, already sensing that this conversation would go in an interesting direction. It often did, with her. After all, there was a reason why she was his favorite conversational partner after Will.

"Well, one of us has to be honest."

"I'm honest." And he was, most of the time. He preferred twisting the truth to outright lies. Truth was so wonderfully *malleable.*

"Not perfectly."

"As honest as anyone."

"Not really," she countered, as calm as ever. "I have conversations with a version of you and hope the real you gets what he needs."

"A version of me?" he asked, intrigued. The last person who'd called him out in such a fashion had been Will and that had been in an entirely different context.

I know the Chesapeake Ripper. I know the Copycat killer… but I want to know Hannibal Lecter.

"Naturally, I respect its meticulous construction, but you are wearing a very well-tailored person suit."

“So, I’m a patient who wears a Person Suit. Interesting.” That's more or less accurate. Mostly less.

“I can still see the shape of you,” Bedelia continued, watching him closely, “But it’s elegantly obstructed. So really, it’s less of a person suit and more of a human veil.”

“I prefer we call it a human shield.” Hannibal lied, not wanting her to look too closely under the ‘veil’ just yet. He quite enjoyed her company and it’d be a pity to kill her so soon.

“That must be lonely.”

Lonely much, doctor?

For a second, he wondered how it’d be like if William were to meet Bedelia. That will definitely turn out to be an enjoyable encounter. He smiled at the mental image and toyed with his answer for a while, before deciding to gift her with a small amount of the honesty she seemed so interested in. And he was eager to know what she’d say abut Will.

“I’m not lonely.” *Not anymore*. “There’s someone else on my side of the veil. Someone… special.”

The surprise that flickered across her face was almost imperceptible but he caught on nonetheless and felt satisfaction curl deep in his gut at wrenching a reaction out of someone so controlled. She composed herself just as swiftly and shot him a calculating look, probably trying to gauge the truth of his words.

“A friend?”

“Yes, but also so much more.” Hannibal didn’t have to fake the reverence that crept into is voice as he spoke of Will. If anything, he had to hold back so that the depth of his emotions wouldn’t show.

“A lover then.” she declared, eyes narrowing minutely at him.

“A partner.” Hannibal corrected, using the term that was the most apt for describing his relationship with Will.

This time Bedelia’s surprise was so much more noticeable, though it seemed to be tempered with a fair dose of skepticism.

“You don’t seem to be the type to enter into a partnership, Hannibal.”

“As I said, Will is special.” There was a lot more he could say, a lot more he *wanted* to say, but this was not the time or place for it. And for all her perception and intellect, he doubted Bedelia could truly understand what the empath meant to him. He doubted anyone could, except the man himself.

“I see. And you’re saying he knows the true you?” There it was again, that skepticism. In her defense, he’d given her plenty of reasons to doubt his claims but nonetheless, it irked him slightly.

“Yes. Sometimes… I think he knows me better than I know myself.”

*

I open the throat from the outside. Three incisions, one to bleed him, second to open the trachea and a third to expose the vocal chords. I open the throat from the inside with the neck of the violin.

I wanted to play him. I wanted to create a sound. This sound isn’t for you or from you. It is from me. My sound.

This is my design.

I give voice to death.

Will played the recreation from earlier in his mind over and over again as the science team went over the body, trying to identify the factor that kept eluding him. There was something about this killer- this musician- that kept nagging at him. It wasn’t the fact that he was an ‘artist’, or at least considered himself as one, there was something else. Something he was missing.

This brand of madness tasted somewhat familiar.

Not *intimate*, like his or Hannibal’s kills, but *familiar*. And it wasn’t the kill itself that called to him, but the hands behind it.

“Sulphur dioxide had the effect of hardening the vocal chords.” Price’s observation caught his attention, jerking him partially out of his reverie, the words drawing a response from the part of him that he’d momentarily surrendered to this killer.

“Made them easier to play,” he said, eyes fixed on the corpse of the trombonist rather than the three very much alive people in the room. “Had to open you up to get a decent sound out of you.”

He shifted his focus on to them, not in the least bit surprised to see the looks they were giving him. It made him wonder, if only for a moment, just how they would react if he were to let his *own* killer show.

Beverly was the first to recover, coming to his rescue- something that he did not need, but could appreciate nonetheless- with an observation that was quite astute. He liked Beverly and her open mindedness; the way she did not *judge.*

He absently listened to their discussion, not bothering to contribute anything. His once again focused inward, on the killer that still lurked in the corners of his mind, and would continue to do so until Will had no more use for him.

‘You’ve killed before’, Will thought at the phantom presence in his mind, willing himself not to be distracted by the haunting music that he could hear, *‘You have a steady, practiced hand.*

But this not your usual method. This is special, a gift for a certain someone. Someone who caught your attention enough to inspire you.'

Will abruptly got up and walked out of the lab, ignoring the questioning glances of his 'colleagues'. As he hurriedly made his way to his car, he contemplated calling Hannibal to let him know he was coming, and then decided against it.

It might as well be a surprise. If the doctor did have any patients when he got there, he could just wait. Hannibal did like- something of an understatement- it when Will discussed other killers with him. And Will generally found some clarity in the conversations with the man, especially if the killer was being particularly stubborn and elusive. Although Hannibal, insufferable narcissist that he was, had a tendency to make Will analyze *his* crimes, even the ones that were not attributed to the Ripper or the Copycat, just for the hell of it.

But right now, he very much wanted to hear what his lover had to say about this one.

*

"Remember when I said Tobias was saying dark things?"

"I made note of it." Hannibal replied, his interest stirred by the sudden shift in topics. Franklyn was, without a doubt, his dullest patient, but his *friend* on the other hand was a more mystifying quarry.

"He said he was gonna cut somebody's throat and play it like a violin. This morning, they found somebody whose throat was cut and played like a violin."

Hannibal stared at Franklyn, keeping his face completely blank as he mulled over that intriguing snippet of information. He'd heard about that murder on the news, though the authorities had yet to release any details. He had little trouble believing that Budge would do something of the sort, but he was curious to know why he'd told Franklyn knowing it would arouse suspicion when the body was discovered.

"Franklyn, do you think Tobias killed that man?"

"I don't know!" His patient stuttered, nervousness and fear rolling off him in waves. "I don't- I don't- If I do, do I have to report it?"

"Do you have a reason not to?"

"What if I'm wrong?"

"What if you're right?" he retorted, though he was certain that Franklyn would not report his friend. The man was too *blindly* loyal for that.

"I'm wrong all the time. Why would he say something like that?"

"Why do you think?"

He could see realization dawn in Franklyn's eyes about as soon as he raised the question, but the man took an undue amount of time to finally piece together a response.

"Because he knew I'd tell you. Why would he *do* that? Oh, God, are you in any danger?"

He almost smiled as Franklyn's misplaced concern for him, though he kept his mirth to himself when he replied, "No, I don't believe so. Though you should decide soon whether or not you want to report your suspicions about Mr Budge to the police."

"Well, what do you think I should do?"

Flee the country, perhaps.

"I cannot tell you what to do, Franklyn. That choice is yours." Hannibal replied, rising to his feet. The other man followed suit, though he looked like he might burst into tears at any given moment. "We'll discuss this further in your next session."

For a second, Franklyn looked like he was about to object but in the end, he just demurely followed Hannibal to the door. And *he* was just as surprised as his patient when he opened the door to the patients' exit to see none other than Will on the other side, slouched against a wall.

"Wait, is *that* your boyfriend?" Hannibal all but winced at the atrocious term and even Will raised an eyebrow in amusement. Franklyn, though, was too busy gaping open-mouthed at Will to pay any attention whatsoever to the two men's reactions. His shock was understandable, given how different Will looked- in his customary plaid shirt and worn jeans with his light stubble- now from that night at the opera, but any understanding Hannibal might have felt was washed away by the anger that rose up inside him at the thinly veiled derision on Franklyn's face.

"I'll see you Friday, Franklyn." He ground out, dismissing the man without so much as a glance in his direction in an uncharacteristic display of rudeness as he strode over to Will who was watching them with a wide smirk. He leaned forward and captured the profiler's lips in a sound kiss, more or less ignoring his soon-to-be-ex-patient. He broke the kiss only when he heard the sound of heavy footsteps scurrying away rapidly and pulled back, smiling at Will who looked like he was struggling not to laugh.

"How rude of you, Dr Lecter. Never took you for a hypocrite."

"Some exceptions can be made, dear Will, as you very well know. Come on in."

*

Hannibal listened without comment as Will described in detail the way the trombone player was murdered and displayed, not yet disclosing what Franklyn had told him. He truly did enjoy seeing Will in his element like this and for the moment, he was content to just watch

his lover stalk around the room in smooth, graceful strides, presenting the killer's melody in a voice not entirely his own.

Only after he finished did he finally sit down opposite Hannibal, shaking off the murderer's psyche with practiced ease.

"Among the first musical instruments were flutes carved from human bone," he announced into the pensive silence that settled between them. Will just rolled his eyes and shot him a fondly exasperated look.

"Now I know what to get you on your next birthday," he said, voice as dry as the Sahara, and Hannibal smiled serenely in response. He wouldn't really put it past Will. The man was unpredictable at the *best* of times. "But back to the matter at hand, I want to know why he was performing. What's his sudden motivation?"

"Who do you think this poetic psychopath was performing for?"

"I'm not sure. A kindred spirit, probably. Either a fellow musician or another killer. Maybe both. But that's not what bothers me."

Hannibal raised an eyebrow, silently demanding a more concrete explanation. It wasn't common for a killer to capture Will's interest like this (which was how *he* preferred things actually). He wanted to know what it was about Mr Budge's work that earned him so much consideration from the profiler. *Afterwards*, he'd tell Will what he knew.

"His madness feels familiar. It's nothing solid, just the ghost of an idea that lingers in the back of my mind but still, I can't help but think that I know this one."

Hannibal found himself helplessly impressed once again by how utterly *exquisite* his Will was. That one brief meeting with Tobias had been enough for Will to recognize his imprint, no matter how faint, on the dead trombonist.

Will you ever cease to surprise me?

He watched in rapture as Will focused inward, more or less ignorant of the doctor's preoccupation for the moment. The empath next words however, effectively killed his pleasure.

"And there's something about the kill itself that… calls to me, but it's not me…"

"You believe this killer is serenading you?" Hannibal asked, his unabashed enjoyment of Will's extraordinary perception lost at the insinuation that another killer was courting the man. It was a pointless endeavor, he knew, but the knowledge was infuriating all the same.

Tobias Budge's death, which he had been idly contemplating ever since Franklyn's unwitting message delivery, suddenly gained a lot more priority.

Will just huffed and shot him a furtive glance that told him he knew precisely what was going through Hannibal's mind at the moment.

“No, it’s not *me*. Not precisely. It’s more like there’s a part of me that… *fuck.”*

The expletive didn’t startle him as much as the wide eyed look Will shot him, which almost instantly narrowed down into a piercing stare.

“It’s not me, it’s *you*.” There was palpable fury in Will’s voice, none of it directed at Hannibal. “This asshole’s serenading the Chesapeake Ripper. Or the Copycat. Those are your only personas at the moment. Dammit, that’s why it felt the way it did.” Will shook his head, lips pulling back from his teeth in a gesture that was far too feral to be a smile. “You are a permanent part of me already, so it felt as if the performance was for me. Or a part of me. You.”

Hannibal felt the first stirrings of trepidation at that news, depriving him even of the chance to fully appreciate the effect he had on the empath.. A killer vying for *Will’s* attention could be attributed to his empathy and ability to understand them. But if Tobias was trying to attract the Ripper and had manipulated Franklyn into passing on his message to *Hannibal*, then there was only one conclusion.

Tobias Budge knew he was the Ripper.

That could be problematic.

“The Copycat’s last victim was Marissa Schuur and you know precisely who killed her.” Hannibal pointed out, smiling at the memory of the young woman who’d been so beautifully presented for him.

“True.” Will agreed, grinning back at him. “So it’s the Ripper then. You haven’t left Jack another sounder just yet- though I guess the upcoming dinner party will remedy that- but you did kill Andrew Caldwell after Silvestri was caught.”

“I believe you found it quite easy to convince the F.B.I that the Ripper was simply demonstrating the difference between a fumbling trainee and a seasoned killer.”

“Well, it’s not like I could tell them I was bored and wanted you to surprise me with a nice, lovely display. You complied rather eagerly, if memory serves.” Will seemed to brighten somewhat at the pleasant memory, some of the anger that colored his face leaving. “And honestly, Caldwell *was* quite a sight for sore eyes.”

As much as he enjoyed this line of discussion, it was time to bring the conversation back on track. After all, he did have something to tell Will.

“I suppose I should be flattered that I inspired such a *performance*-” He did love how Will’s eyes narrowed dangerously at the word ‘flattered’ “- but knowing the source, I am much less inclined to be so.”

Will suddenly went very, very still in the way that only a predator could, and his eyes took on a calculating sheen as they coolly regarded Hannibal.

“Knowing the source? Care to elaborate, darlin’?”

He would never understand Will's tendency to call him that when he was annoyed.

"Franklyn just informed me that his friend, Tobias Budge, told him that he was going to cut open somebody's throat and play it like a violin. You've met him once before and recognized what he is. That's probably why his kill felt familiar to you. And he does fit your profile perfectly."

Will's only reaction was to cock his head to the side, eyes still fixed on Hannibal with eerie intensity.

He smiled.

"I'm going to guess-," Will drawled, leaning forward as much as he could in his chair, "- that you didn't tell me this sooner because you were curious to hear my thoughts on the killer."

You do know me well, my dear William.

"I am not one to waste an opportunity to watch you utilize your gift."

Will shook his head, some of the menace leaving him, with exasperation clouding the smooth lines of his face, and muttered something that sounded like 'insufferable bastard' under his breath.

"You know, I'm shocked that you haven't managed to convince Jack to let you accompany me to every single crime scene. Yet."

"Yet." Hannibal agreed merrily, enjoying the familiar blend of mirth and frustration his actions often roused in his Will.

"Right. So, why did Budge more or less confess to your patient?"

He was rather certain that Will already knew why, but answered nonetheless.

"He knew that Franklyn would tell me. Since you are convinced that he was serenading the Ripper, I assume he knows what I am."

"Is your patient going to report him?"

"It is highly unlikely. Tobias is his only friend and he is too desperate for companionship to throw that away without solid proof. Which is quite convenient for us."

Will nodded, his thoughtful expression shifting into something much darker.

"He sent you a message, Hannibal. And he went into so much trouble for it. And though the end result was rather pathetic, don't you think it would be *rude* not to… reply in kind?"

He swallowed, the murderous light in Will's eyes affecting him in ways that it most certainly should not.

"My dear Will," he murmured, "I sincerely doubt you want me to accept his *courtship."*

Will's eyes flashed at that and he stood up, striding over to Hannibal. He leaned forward and cupped his face, lips curling into a razor-sharp smile as he leaned down to press them against Hannibal's in something that was not quite a kiss.

"I don't want *you* to do anything, love. But *we* are certainly going to give an *appropriate* response to Mr Budge."

*

This wouldn't be the first time Will and Hannibal killed together.

They had wasted little time in exploring their *compatibility* and had been delighted to find that they worked together *beautifully.*

But this would be the first time they actually displayed one of their collaborations. The thought was… exciting to say the least.

Will shifted his gaze from the bound man on the floor to Hannibal, whose focus was on Will rather than their quarry. In his eyes, he saw the same exhilaration he felt, a feverish gleam that made them appear more red than brown.

He grinned at Hannibal, the part of him that reveled in death and destruction taking over his mind, all but banishing the softer side that he presented to the world. Hannibal didn't smile back, but his eyes shifted, something beautiful and chaotic peering back at him through a thin veneer of humanity.

This was what he enjoyed most about their joint ventures, few as they have been so far. This freedom to be everything that they were without anything, not even an illusion of civility, to hold them back. A chance to *truly* discard their meticulously crafted masks. Killing broke down any barriers that were left between them, fully exposing the side to them both that could express itself only through death.

Intimacy at its purest.

Will's grin widened as he knelt on the floor beside their prey, placing a latex covered hand on his pale, sweaty cheek. He stared at Will with raw, delicious terror in his eyes, his pitiful whimpers lost behind the cloth covering his mouth.

He was a violinist- the profession not a coincidence by any means- who'd been unlucky enough to find himself on Hannibal's handy little rolodex. His perceived 'offense' had nothing to do with music, but his partner had assured him that the man's musical ability was nothing worth mentioning.

Will didn't quite care either way.

He was uncharacteristically, single-mindedly focused on the message they were intending to send.

He looked up at Hannibal, one hand still gently stroking the musician's cheek, and tamed his manic grin into something warmer.

"Shall we?"

*

"This is humiliation, Jack. Not just of the victim, but also of the intended recipient. This is… *rejection."*

The violinist- Geoffrey Wild, though the rest of the team didn't know that just yet- was arranged in a manner similar to how Budge had displayed the trombonist. He was placed in a kneeling, ergonomic chair, his back duct-taped to a brace for the purpose of keeping him upright. His neck was cut wide open, but instead of a violin, his mouth and throat was stuffed with rue blossoms.

Rue for disdain. That had been Hannibal's idea.

Flaying his hands and removing his fingers to deprive him of his means to make music, had been Will's.

Geoffrey had not appreciated their combined creativity, but he'd died relatively quickly. None if it was really meant for him anyway.

They had not taken any of his organs, not wanting to risk this being associated with the Ripper in any manner, but Hannibal had removed a few strips of meat from the man's legs. You couldn't fault a man his proclivities.

Will could feel Jack's eyes on him, as intense as ever, as he waited not-so-patiently for Will to elaborate further. The head of the BAU was more irritable than usual that day; the press was already having a field day with a second murder occurring at the location of a recent one (Will had not been all that enthusiastic about that anonymous tip to Freddie Lounds, but it had been a necessary evil) and the F.B.I was suffering the consequences.

"As I said, the trombonists' murder was a performance by an experienced killer unfamiliar with displaying his victims. It was a serenade for another killer. And this… this is the response. A rejection."

It was more difficult than usual to rein in the grin that was threatening to split his face at the memory.

"So this isn't just a copycat murder. You have any idea who did this?"

Yes, Jack, I do.

"Not really." Will replied, adopting a look of intense consternation as he took his eyes off the stage to focus on Jack. "But this killer's a lot like the first one. He's killed before, but not like

this. This display is new to him as well. These two murders are anomalies, not their usual styles."

It was as entertaining as ever to see Jack swallow his lies and half-truths with blind faith. It was funny; Jack didn't trust him, or anyone else for that matter, but he held his opinion in ridiculously high regard. That was extremely convenient, of course.

He didn't pay much attention to Jack as he called the rest of the team into the concert hall, choosing instead to try and picture Tobias Budge's reaction when the news reached him.

From what he had seen and sensed of Budge, he was reckless as made evident by his risking discovery for the sake of a gamble of a performance and his pseudo-confession to his friend. He must have had a fair amount of faith in Hannibal accepting his… proposal.

He would not take rejection well. He would probably react rather violently, towards either Hannibal or Will.

And he just couldn't *wait.*

Chapter End Notes

Next up, Tobias reacts and Will's predatory instincts discover a brand new dimension. And there's smut.

In case you were wondering, *'Lonely much, doctor?' and 'I know the Chesapeake Ripper. I know the Copycat killer… but I want to know Hannibal Lecter.' are Will's lines from chapter two of ADSAS.*

Chapter three's almost finished:-)

Action and Reaction

Chapter Summary

> Tobias does not take rejection well and Will has a curious reaction to the resulting carnage.

Chapter Notes

> Here, there's smut. I owed it to you, with the way I ended 'A darkness seen and shared'. <3
> According to Google Maps, its 76 min from Quantico to Baltimore. Let's ignore that somewhat as the show usually does, because otherwise, there's no way Jack will get to Hannibal's office when he does.
>
> A million thanks to the lovely Entity_Sylvir for beta-ing this chapter. ♡

See the end of the chapter for more notes

"Nine times." Franklyn stated, staring at him with an expression that might have been hurt but came off as pitiful desperation instead. "I can count on two hands the number of times I've been dumped by a psychiatrist."

I cannot fathom why.

"I am sorry, Franklyn. But I think it's best if you see another doctor."

"You're giving me a referral."

Hannibal agreed, mildly amused by the blatant *accusation* in the other's tone, though the entire conversation was turning out to be far too redundant to keep his attention all that much. Still maintaining an illusion of being focused on Franklyn, he let his mind wander, or rather, he zeroed in on the lovely memory of last night. Will had been beautiful, like a vengeful angel of destruction, with blood on his hands and death in his eyes.

Idly, he wondered whether the other killer's reaction to the rejection would somehow involve Franklyn in any manner.

He hoped not. The man was a fool with no sense of self-preservation but his death could cast some unwanted scrutiny on Hannibal. It wouldn't be anything he couldn't handle, but he would nonetheless prefer to avoid any unnecessary trouble.

“But you were a referral.” Franklyn whined, the rising pitch of his voice grating on Hannibal.

“I’m also part of the problem. You focus too much on your therapist and not enough on the therapy.”

“You lost respect for me because I wouldn’t report Tobias, didn’t you?”

I never had any respect for you in the first place.

Before he could respond with something generic and reassuring, a voice he’d heard only once before interjected.

“Report Tobias for what?”

Hannibal allowed himself to feel a brief moment of surprise at the sheer *audacity* of the man, confronting him in broad daylight.

Reckless.

He rose to his feet as Tobias Budge entered the room, more focused on a very confused Franklyn than him at the moment.

“Tobias? What are you doing here?”

“I came to say goodbye, Franklyn.” Hannibal watched, unmoving, as his patient rose from his seat, taking a couple of steps towards his ‘friend’, completely oblivious to the danger he presented.

“What do you mean ‘goodbye’? Are you going somewhere?”

“Yes. But first, I have some business to attend to with your therapist.”

Tobias’ gaze flickered to him, murderous rage flashing across his face, before it returned to Franklyn.

“Franklyn, I want you to leave now.” He knew it was a pointless request, but it was worth a try. Though if the way Tobias was looking at his patient was any indication, Franklyn wasn’t going anywhere.

“Stay right where you are, Franklyn.”

He fought down an exasperated sigh.

Hannibal surged forward, easily grabbing Franklyn, who was frozen gaping at the intruder, and snapped his neck quickly and cleanly, allowing the body to drop to the ground with a dull thud.

So much for not wanting him to die.

“I was looking forward to that.”

“Pity. I assume you’ve received our message.” He almost smiled at how the other’s eyes narrowed further at the word ‘our’. But he was still somewhat impressed by Tobias’ ability to keep himself calm and composed enough to converse in a relatively civilized manner, at least for the time being, in spite of the fury he knew was coursing through him. “You’re reckless, Tobias, coming here like this.”

Tobias shrugged, unconcerned and moved closer, shooting a final glance at the dead man on the floor.

“I’ve always been prepared for dealing with the consequences of my actions. The police would’ve sent some men, probably two, to interview me because I own a string shop. I’d have killed them. Then, I’d have found Franklyn, killed him and disappeared. But… you forced my hand. And I thought, I am going to have to run anyway, so why not do it now, and kill two birds with one stone.

Hannibal added ‘impulsive’ and ‘self-destructive’ to his mental list of Tobias’ *qualities*.

“I am curious, though, why me?” It would always help to know what actually gave him away, so that he could prevent any further mishaps in the future.

“I was going to kill you, at first.” Hannibal smiled at that, though he kept himself still as the other prowled even closer, until he was within arm’s each. Foolish. “But then I followed you one night. Out of town. Out of state. To a lonely bus yard.”

Hannibal did not respond, gave no indication that the revelation had affected him in any manner whatsoever, but internally, he was chastising himself for being so foolish as to let something like this happen. At least now he knew precisely how Tobias had known the truth about him. He’d seen him kill Caldwell for his dear Will.

“I thought then, that I could use a friend. Someone who can see the world and the people in it the way I do. But now, I see that you’re not *interested*.”

And there it was again, that flash of pure rage, barely held in check, just waiting to be unleashed.

This would be troublesome, but at least it should be entertaining.

“Indeed I am not. I already have someone who thinks the way I do. You pale in comparison.”

Tobias tensed visibly, gritting his teeth in a predictable reaction to the blatant provocation. But he did not move to strike just yet.

“Your *partner*. Not so innocent as he appears then.”

They stood like that, silently sizing each other up, for a long, tense moment.

Then, all hell broke loose.

*

For once, Will was genuinely enjoying the time spent in the crime lab.

After all, it was so very entertaining to watch Katz, Price and Zeller chase shadows trying to find *anything* resembling evidence in the remains of what had once been Geoffrey Wild. So when Jack barged inside and ordered Will to come with him in his usual, surly manner, he felt a flare of that special brand of irritation he'd reserved for the Head of the BAU.

But when Jack told him, once they were in the parking lot, with a lovely blend of frustration, anger and worry about *Hannibal* being attacked in his office, resulting in two casualties- not the doctor, of course- Will felt curiously *blank*.

For just a moment, that is.

The rush of emotions that followed that brief second of apathy was, without a doubt, the most confusing he'd ever felt in his entire life. And it was all his own, not borrowed flashes from this killer or that.

There was surprise, at Budge- and he was willing to bet the tattered remains of his soul that it was Budge- and his daring (as well as his sheer stupidity) at forcing a confrontation in such unfavorable conditions. Both he and Hannibal had expected something a little more subtle, more *private* from the fellow killer. Then, there was curiosity, his perpetual companion, at how it had all turned out. He knew from Jack that Hannibal had sustained some injuries though he knew none of the details. But what he really wanted to see was the damage his partner had inflicted on Budge, felt a *visceral* excitement at the mere thought of it.

However, the emotion that simultaneously shocked and fascinated him was the *concern* he was currently experiencing. Actual, genuine concern.

Will knew he was obsessed with Hannibal Lecter. Obsessed, besotted, smitten, intrigued… the list went on. He would even go so far as to say that whatever he felt for the other was the closest thing to love he was capable of feeling. Though he liked to think that the dark, twisted regard they held for each other was so much *more* than something as insipid as *love*.

And it was true that their strange, sacred relationship had indeed caused him to *feel* a variety of sentiments with surprising intensity. But this uncomfortable sensation that had bloomed in his chest after Jack informed that Hannibal was hurt was utterly unfamiliar. And so very *powerful*.

He wasn't entirely sure how he felt about being made to feel so… human. Hannibal had never made him feel *human* before and Will had never desired anything of the sort.

The very reason behind his overwhelming attraction to the psychiatrist was the darkness they *shared*. If anything, Will felt more like a monster with him than elsewhere; loved that feeling, that *freedom*.

But despite his confusion about this newfound tenderness, Will was powerless against its pull.

This would take some time to sort through. *Later*, after this mess was sorted out.

Will all but jumped out of the car when Jack finally pulled over in front of the building that housed Hannibal's practice, his tumultuous thoughts during the long drive from Quantico to Baltimore adding an edge to his movements that he couldn't quite control. Jack caught up with him easily enough, shooting him an odd glance that he ignored.

A peculiar mixture of excitement and trepidation filled him, but not even his oh-so-vivid imagination could have prepared him for his own reaction to the sight that greeted him inside the familiar office.

Even at first glance, it as glaringly obvious that Hannibal was injured. He was sitting, slumped, in his chair, normally immaculate hair falling haphazardly into his face, shadowing his eyes. He looked so very vulnerable that Will knew immediately that it was an act. He was hurt, yes, but the good doctor was not even half as affected as he appeared.

Still, it was a *very* convincing act.

All the excitement, curiosity, concern… it was all shoved to a corner of his mind within an instant of laying eyes on his lover.

Instead, he was hit by desire so *raw* that he had to pause at the doorway, exerting hard-won iron control over himself to keep his interest from showing.

Will always did revel in the utter helplessness of his prey.

It shouldn't be all that surprising that seeing his lover in such a state would *appeal* to him.

And Hannibal did wear vulnerability *so well*.

As if sensing Will's eyes on him, Hannibal raised his head, looking directly at Will, who finally released his death grip on the doorframe to step inside. Hannibal smiled, a minute twitch of pale lips that went so perfectly with the image he was projecting that it was *hell* on Will's self-restraint.

He ignored Jack as he strode over to Hannibal, sparing only a quick glance at the slightly familiar bodies on the ground, his interest in them completely lost. He perched on the desk beside Hannibal, sitting as close as he could without climbing into the other's lap. His eyes were inexplicably drawn to the small trickle of blood down Hannibal's chin, and Will had to swallow against a suddenly dry throat. The motion did not escape Hannibal whose eyes widened almost imperceptibly, realization dawning, as he took in Will's expression, the doctor easily seeing through his mask.

'I was worried." Will murmured, the simple words not even remotely sufficient to convey the fucked up cocktail of emotions that he'd experienced and was still experiencing.

"I'm fine, my dear Will." Hannibal's voice was softer than usual and wavered ever so slightly.

An act. Just an act.

Will resisted the impulse to ask him if he did that on purpose. He wouldn't put it past the other man.

Will's hand moved of its own accord, stroking the side of Hannibal's face lightly before it crept into his flaxen locks, nestling into them.

He didn't care about their audience; the cops, the techs or even Jack.

All he could think about was how much he wanted to just yank his partner's head back and lap up the blood that streaked his face so tantalizingly. Will tightened his grip on his hair and Hannibal's eyes fluttered close for a millisecond before they flashed open to regard Will with muted heat.

"Tell me, Dr Lecter, why did this guy come to your office in the first place?"

Jack's gruff voice disrupted them, diffusing the tension that was starting build between the two, at least for the moment. Will threw him a glance over his shoulder, not missing how Jack's gaze was focused intently on Will's hand where it was buried in Hannibal's hair.

Oh well.

He made no move to remove the limb, adjusting it instead so that it rested more comfortably atop Hannibal's head. But he very carefully did not look at Hannibal, not wanting to be *distracted* with Jack so close.

"He came to kill my patient. And from their conversation, it sounded like Mr Budge was responsible for that man at the concert hall."

"He told you this?" Jack asked skeptically, eyes still lingering on Will's hand.

"No, he told Franklyn. He also said something about how he shouldn't have rejected him."

That was as good a lie as any, he supposed, easily seeing where Hannibal was going with this. The very idea of Hannibal's neurotic patient being a killer was utterly ridiculous but Jack didn't know that.

"We theorized that the man who killed the trombonist was serenading someone." Will interjected, keeping his eyes trained on a spot on the wall in front of him. "This morning, there was another murder, an obvious rejection of the first performance. It was all over *Tattlecrime*. Do you think Budge was serenading your patient and this was his reaction to being turned down?"

"I don't know." Hannibal replied. "This was all I could gather from their conversation before Mr Budge broke Franklyn's neck. Then he attacked me."

"And you killed him." It was a statement, but Jack managed to turn it into a loaded question.

"Yes." Will still didn't look at Hannibal, but he couldn't ignore how *small* his voice sounded, and his fingers dug into Hannibal's scalp as he attempted to regulate both his predatory instincts and his libido, which was all tangled together at the moment.

Goddamn it.

"Jack," Will turned his body so that he could look properly at the man, "I really don't think this is the time for an interrogation. Hannibal's already given his statement. The rest can wait. If these guys could finish up soon, I'd like to take him home."

Jack wore suspicion with very little grace, his eyes were narrowed at the two of them and a larger than usual scowl was marring his features. But he said nothing else, turning away instead to study the scene, calling out for everyone to get on with it.

Will was quite certain that he was going to have a very undesirable conversation with Jack in the near future.

At the moment, he didn't give a shit.

Taking a deep breath, he brought his eyes back to Hannibal, who was watching him intently, eyes dark with *something* that he had no intention of examining too closely at the moment. Instead, he raked his eyes over the rest of him, taking in the bandaged arm, the blood that stained the material of his pants and… the cut on his lips.

"You patched yourself up before the paramedics got here, didn't you?" His voice sounded rough from the effect this situation was having on him and the effort it took to keep himself in check, but Hannibal did not comment on it.

"Yes. But I'll have to dress the wounds more properly once we get home."

"I'll help."

Hannibal just hummed in affirmation, though Will had to wonder just *how* he'd handle a scenario involving himself and Hannibal's injuries.

He reluctantly removed his hand from the other man's hair, trailing it down slowly until it rested on his shoulder. He left it there as they waited.

It took about half an hour before they were allowed to leave and they both spent the time in contemplative silence with only the occasional eye contact but by the time they were given the clear, Will felt hyperaware of Hannibal.

Thankfully, Jack did not approach them again, though Will could feel the agent's eyes burning holes in the back of his head every few minutes.

The drive to Chandler Square was quiet as well, though Will kept sneaking glances at Hannibal, which was a bad idea all around and not just because he was driving. Now that they were alone, Hannibal no longer projected the air of a traumatized victim, but that just made it all the more obvious that the fight with Budge had taken its toll on the doctor, physically at least.

Yet, all the concern Will had felt earlier was hopelessly lost in the heady rush of his blood.

It was nearly eight in the evening by the time they made it to Hannibal's house. There was an unspoken agreement between them to skip dinner- food was the farthest thing from Will's mind at the moment anyway- in favor of tending to Hannibal's wounds. The stairs were a struggle though; Hannibal had to let Will assist him despite having stubbornly insisted on walking without support until then in spite of the condition of his leg.

Neither acknowledged the strange tension thrumming between the two of them.

Will had enough trouble controlling himself as it was.

Hannibal's master bathroom was ridiculously opulent like the rest of his house, the black marbled monstrosity well over the size of Will's living room. He left the other in the bedroom so that he could fetch Hannibal's medical kit- the man kept one in pretty much every room of the house- from one of the bathroom cabinets. Hannibal was stripped down to just his briefs by the time he returned and he felt some of the heat he'd forced down back in the office creep into him as he traced the familiar contours of his lover's body with his eyes.

"Sit," he commanded, placing the kit on the bed before kneeling on the floor beside it, eyes trained on Hannibal as he somewhat stiffly made his way over to the bed and lowered himself on to it. Will shifted so that he was crouched between Hannibal's legs. Dark bruises had already started to bloom on the sculpted muscles of his arms and torso, clear evidence of a very physical altercation. Will watched, mesmerized, as Hannibal carefully unwound the bandage on his arm, revealing a thin circle of raised, angry flesh, already scabbed over. He took even more care with the one on his thigh and Will's breath escaped him in an audible hiss as the layers of cloth and gauze was peeled away to expose what appeared to be a deep stab wound.

He felt a moment of blind fury at the scum that had done this to *his* Hannibal. But it was gone as soon as it came, swept away by the knowledge that he was already dead and an odd sort of jealousy that rose from the fact that it had not been *Will* who did this, painted on Hannibal's skin with blood and violence, that the privilege had gone to one so undeserving.

He swallowed, lost for a second to the exquisite images that flooded his mind at the thought.

Yes, it was a very good thing he had never tried to entertain a 'normal' relationship.

He let his gaze trail back up, greedily memorizing the new though temporary patterns on the other's flesh as he did so, finally settling on Hannibal's face, braving the eyes that he could sense on him during the entirety of his inspection.

But his eyes were once again drawn to the blood that still stained Hannibal's lips and jaw, and he frowned. It should have been cleaned long ago. Hannibal may have let it be at first to fool Jack and the officers, but afterwards, he could have washed it off at any given time.

Unless it was there for Will's benefit.

He swallowed, again.

This man will be the end of me.

“Tell me, Hannibal, did you let that *pig*,” his lips curled into a sneer at the mere mention of the unworthy fool but he kept his voice level as he calmly held Hannibal’s gaze, keeping the madness that lurked just under his skin contained for the moment, “damage you so just so it wouldn’t appear suspicious? Or did you just *lose* yourself in the thrill of it all?”

“It was a bit of both.” The words were a soft whisper with a mere hint of amusement in them. “But mostly the former.”

Will did not respond as they both worked in tandem to clean and redress the wounds; he was competent enough at it thanks to his proclivities despite the fact that he lacked any actual medical training. He didn’t miss how Hannibal left the cut and blood on his face well alone.

The entire process was *another* exercise in self-restraint for him.

Will finished bandaging the gash on his leg and looked up at Hannibal from where he was kneeling between his parted legs. There was a faint smile on his lips, one that, once again, drew his attention to the beautiful mess on his chin. The smile widened as he noticed exactly where Will’s gaze was focused, a languid stretch of thin lips that somehow managed to appear both demure and suggestive.

“You’re aroused, seeing me like this.”

Hannibal sounded detached, almost clinical, the tone contrasting sharply with the naked lust in his eyes.

And his willpower, which was steadily deteriorating throughout the evening, completely *broke* at this open acknowledgement.

He steadily increased the pressure on the thigh wound, keeping his eyes locked with Hannibal’s as he did so, fingers seeking and pressing through the bandages at the exact spot where the knife had sunk deep.

He watched, smiling as Hannibal’s eyes widened and he sucked in a sharp breath, shades of red and brown being wholly swallowed by abysmal black as the pain in his leg grew and grew.

Will leaned in and pressed his mouth to where his fingers had been, kissing the spot gently as if in apology for the pain. That is, until he parted his lips and bit down hard, faintly tasting the blood that was beginning to seep into the white gauze. He only drew back when he heard a strangled gasp from the man above him, felt toned muscles clench harshly between his hands as he did so.

He rose to his feet, knocking the bag from the bed to the carpeted floor with little care, until he was towering over Hannibal, drinking in the sight of the light flush on his partner’s cheeks and the way he was breathing slightly faster than usual. He eased himself on to the bed, one knee pressed against the bulge between the Hannibal’s legs and gently cupped his face with both hands, bending down so that he could whisper his words against bloodied lips.

“*Ruination* suits you.”

His hands tangled in Hannibal's hair with striking speed, no longer gentle, as he pulled the other man's head back to expose the vulnerable column of his neck. Will captured his lips in a brutal kiss, sucking mercilessly at the fresh cut on his bottom lip, moaning out loud as the familiar taste of blood flooded his palette. He paid no mind to the way Hannibal's fingers dug into his clothed back as his mouth chased the blood covering his jaw, lapping at it greedily until there was none left.

Will pushed Hannibal down to the bed, deliberately placing his hands on a particularly livid bruise and grinned, delighted at the way a moan caught in Hannibal's throat at the pain.

What a pair we make.

He moved to straddle the other man, keeping him pinned to the sheets with ease as he ground their hips together, both of them fully hard from their twisted version of foreplay. A tiny part of Will's mind that was not fully lost to the feel of Hannibal against him and the wonderful way his lips quivered as he panted beneath him, wondered why it had taken this long for their sadistic leanings to creep into their sex life. Then, Hannibal jerked forward to kiss him in a violent clash of lips and teeth, tearing at his shirt, and that thought was lost as well.

He couldn't quite remember how they lost the rest of their clothes, but they were both naked in record time, devouring each other with unchecked hunger. Will pulled back and caught Hannibal's injured wrist in his hand, ripping off the new dressings before he bought it to his mouth. He lightly traced the swollen flesh with his tongue, loving the way Hannibal bit down on his own lips at the sensation, before he *sucked* until the skin broke again and more blood welled up for him to taste and enjoy. Hannibal mewled and bucked up, trying in vain to wrench his hand away from Will's iron grip. He leaned down to kiss him and share the taste between them, but he didn't release the wrist, pinning it to the mattress instead with his hand wrapped tight around the thin red circle.

"*Will."* The name escaped Hannibal's lips in a breathy gasp as he abandoned his half hearted efforts to free his hand in favor of pulling Will down to mouth at his throat.

"It just makes me want to ruin you more." Will whispered as Hannibal bit and sucked at the sensitive skin on his neck.

Grabbing the lube without getting off the doctor was an exercise in dexterity, but he did it, squeezing a generous amount of it into his fingers before reaching down between their bodies to roughly insert a finger inside Hannibal, swallowing his muffled curse with a wet, sloppy kiss. He added another before Hannibal could fully get used to the first and he arched off the bed with a loud groan, his free hand coming up to rake down Will's back, blunt nails leaving angry red lines in their wake. Will sucked on a purpling bruise on Hannibal's shoulder, licking and worrying it between his teeth until he was sure that *his* mark had been laid over it.

"Will." Hannibal gritted out from between clenched teeth when he scissored his fingers inside the man, spreading him open, far too impatient to be gentle. And if Hannibal's swollen cock, trapped between their bodies, was any indication, he didn't mind at all.

"Your vocabulary seems severely limited tonight, Dr Lecter." It took considerable effort to keep his voice even, but he managed, brushing his mouth over Hannibal's lips and cheek in

between words. “I wonder why that is.”

He didn’t wait for a reply as he reared up, grabbing the lube to slick himself up. He mercilessly pushed his way inside Hannibal, panting harshly at how *tight* he felt. He kept on pushing until he bottomed out and then leaned over Hannibal to kiss him again, relishing the small, involuntary noises that tumbled past his lips.

He pulled back almost all the way out before slamming back inside and Hannibal moaned, spreading his thighs wider, gripping on to Will with tense fingers. Will knew that there was no way either one of them would last for long, too turned on from the earlier events, and set a fast, brutal pace, thrusting into Hannibal with increasingly erratic jerks of his hips.

He wrapped a hand around Hannibal’s cock where it lay flushed and leaking against his stomach and stroked in time with each roll of his hips, groaning out loud when fingers dug in hard on his shoulders, breaking skin and drawing blood.

Hannibal came first, with a choked scream, spilling into Will’s hand as he kept on stroking him. Will fucked him ruthlessly through his climax even as Hannibal writhed and clenched around him, mewling almost helplessly at the sensations. He came soon after, biting down hard on Hannibal’s neck to stifle his own scream.

He collapsed unceremoniously on the panting mess of a man beneath him, still buried deep inside Hannibal and unwilling to pull out just yet. For several long seconds they were both silent, tying to regain some of their mental faculties. Will spoke first, face burrowed into the crook of Hannibal’s sweat slick neck.

“Sometimes, I just want to tear you apart… and put you back together, so I can do it all over again and again and again.”

He pulled out of the other man and leaned over him with some difficulty, just so he could stare into Hannibal’s eyes, dark and glazed over with pure pleasure.

“And you know what, Hannibal? I think you’ll *let me*.”

Hannibal only closed his eyes in response, letting out a shuddering breath that vibrated through both their bodies.

This time, when they kissed, it was with unrestrained reverence and the great, terrible regard they held for each other that was the closest thing to love either of them would ever feel.

Chapter End Notes

I always seem to end the works in this series abruptly. Hehe. I was originally going to write a breakfast scene from Hannibal’s perspective, but my muse said ‘No-No’. So,

here ya go.

Funny, how Will’s boredom is the thing that moved this plot forward. I took some liberties with the injuries and their treatment. *shrug* I know shit about real medicine. Oh and, first time writing intercourse, so go easy on me.

I don't have any more ideas for this verse at the moment, so i guess its the end. For now.

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